



News from **SALEM COUNTY**

Office of Public Information

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COUNTY BRACES FOR HURRICANE IRENE

(SALEM, NJ)—On Friday afternoon County officials met to once again prepare a comprehensive coordinated response to Hurricane Irene's effects in Salem County. County Emergency Management Coordinator Jeffrey Pompper, in consultation with County Freeholders and Administration, signed a State of Emergency declaration as of approximately 3:00 PM on Friday. At this time no protective actions are required of the public. All County officials have been placed on an on-call status and Emergency Management and Public Works Officials are preparing for the next 36 to 48 hours.

"Salem County is taking this hurricane's threat very seriously," said Freeholder Director Ware. "This hurricane has the potential to cause a great deal of devastation in our community and our goal is first and foremost to protect lives and then protect property. It is important that during this emergency, we, as a County community, look out for the needs of neighbors and loved ones. Salem County has always come together during times of emergencies and we know that the difficulties faced by this storm will be no match to our County's ability to overcome. We are urging every resident to listen to the advice and directives of emergency management officials. This is a serious situation and we must respond accordingly."

The Office of Emergency Management utilized the Reverse 911 system on Thursday evening to advise residents in low-lying or flood prone areas to voluntarily evacuate by early afternoon Saturday. Residents are urged to seek shelter with a friend or family in a safe area. Individuals with special needs may wish to consider earlier evacuation.

Salem County is opening mass care shelters this weekend. Utilizing the Red Cross/CERT teams, Salem Community College Shelter will open at approximately 5 PM on Friday evening, while Schalick High School Shelter will open sometime on Saturday morning. Cots and blankets are being delivered to the locations. As details are finalized for locations, the County will provide it again through this reverse 911 system and local media and emergency organizations. Non-emergency phone calls should be avoided so phone lines are available for emergencies.

"In addition to preparing for the shelters, our CERT team has been busy preparing sandbags for the coming storm and the flooding that is expected," said Deputy Director David Lindenmuth, Chair of the County Public Safety Committee. "Our emergency management and volunteer force in this County has always served the community well



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and we know that they will rise to meet this challenge. We ask our residents to be mindful of our first responders, heed their advice, and only call 911 for emergencies. All other inquiries should be made to local emergency management officials.”

The County Emergency Operations Center will open at 6 PM on Saturday. County officials will be actively monitoring the hurricane’s effect on Salem County and responding appropriately.

“We believe that this will be a significant challenge for local, county, and state officials,” said Freeholder Bobbitt, Chair of the County Public Works Department. “Our public works and engineering departments will be working with their local and county counterparts to address all the problems that we expect to face. Residents should expect downed power lines, problems with trees, and flooding. Caution should be used at all times. Our crews will be attempting to address problems as they arise, but please be patient as we are sure that this hurricane will once again test our resources. Our public works crews have done well in the past and they will do it again.”

The Public Works and Engineering Departments have spent Thursday and Friday ensuring that drains are clear from debris, opening flood gates in waterways, and preparing for the barrage of problems this hurricane may bring to bear to Salem County.

The County will be utilizing various sources to communicate to residents during the hurricane. The sources include the reverse 911 system, twitter (<http://twitter.com/#!/SalemCountyNJ>), and a new blog on the County website (<http://salemcountynj.blogspot.com/>). These resources will be updated regularly throughout the weekend. The public is urged to follow them, in addition to following other resources.

Below are some tips and resources for residents on staying informed during the Hurricane:

On the Web - Use credible websites to get information about natural hazards and emergency preparedness. The NJOEM works closely with the National Weather Service and the National Hurricane Center regarding storm predictions and forecasts.

National Weather Service - <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/phi/>

National Hurricane Center - <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>

New Jersey Office of Emergency Management - www.ready.nj.gov

Office of the NJ State Climatologist, Rutgers - <http://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/>



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American Red Cross - <http://www.redcross.org/>

Federal Emergency Management Agency www.ready.gov

Social Media - Social media and other advanced communications technologies are used by frequently by emergency managers statewide.

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/New-Jersey-Office-of-Emergency-Management/165525506798189>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/NJSP>

NJ Alert - NJ Alert is a free, voluntary and confidential emergency alerting system that allows NJ Office of Emergency Management officials to send E-mail or text messages to cell phones and other email enabled devices during an emergency event. Sign up for NJ Alert by logging on to: www.njalert.gov.

NOAA Weather Radio - is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service Office. NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. NOAA Weather Radios are typically inexpensive, easily available in stores and can often be programmed for your specific area.

Traditional Media - Continue to monitor traditional media sources TV, newspapers and radio to stay informed of breaking news and continued coverage of emergency events.

Connect with information sources and stay in-the-know. Learning about hazards in your area, knowing about emergency plans that have been established, and staying informed are the first steps toward being a disaster survivor, instead of a disaster victim.

The County suggests the following readiness steps in preparation for Hurricane Irene:

- “**Get a Kit**” of emergency supplies – the items that will help you stay self-sufficient for up to three days (72 hours), if needed.
 - Three days' supply of canned, non-perishable, ready-to-eat **FOOD**
 - Three days' supply of **WATER** (a total of **three gallons per family member**)
 - **Battery-operated RADIO** and extra batteries
 - **FLASHLIGHT** and extra batteries
 - One week's **prescription MEDICATIONS**



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- **FIRST AID KIT**
 - Personal **TOILETRIES**
 - Non-electric **CAN OPENER** and **UTENSILS**
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS** items:
 - INFANT care items
 - Items for ELDERLY family members
 - Items for relatives with DISABILITIES
 - **CASH** or **TRAVELERS CHECKS**
 - Store important **DOCUMENTS** in a waterproof, safe location
- “**Make a Plan**” for what you and your family will do during an emergency – this includes knowing how to evacuate and how to Shelter-in-Place.
 - If you are elderly or have special needs, contact the Salem County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) at 856-769-2900. They can make special arrangements for your transportation and check on you regularly if you are at home during an emergency. You should always make plans for your transportation if you and your family need to evacuate. If you do not have transportation, have a plan to carpool with a neighbor or contact OEM. Also, make plans for your pets and consider them in your emergency kit.
 - “**Stay Informed**” of possible threats. Tune into your local media outlets for the latest breaking weather news. In the event of an emergency a battery powered radio is a great tool.

For more information on how to properly prepare your household or business, please visit: www.ready.nj.gov/plan/hurricane-before.html or call 211. If you have more questions about Salem County emergency plans, call the OEM at 856-769-2900.

The NJ transit services in Salem County are canceled tomorrow.

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